

**Adopt-A-Highway** is an innovative program developed by the Iowa Department of Transportation to increase public awareness of environmental needs along Iowa highways by making sections of roadsides available for “adoption.” This gives the adopting individuals or groups opportunities to improve the appearance of our roadsides throughout the state.

Activities may include litter removal and planting and/or maintenance of trees, shrubs, wildflowers and native grasses. Other activities are eligible with approval from the department. Seeds may be harvested and used to plant other public lands. However, seeds harvested on public lands cannot be sold.

Highway adoptions can be used to make the entrance, or gateway, to a community more inviting and offer a proud welcome.

To allow greater participation in the program, a group or an individual may only adopt one entryway to a community.



**Caring for roadsides** will not only make them more attractive to the traveling public, but will also make major improvements in our environment.

Grassy roadsides provide habitat for ground nesting birds such as pheasants, quail, meadowlarks and many other song birds.

Roadsides also provide excellent habitat for other wildlife. Many roadside plantings provide a source of food for wildlife.

Property owners may wish to adopt sections adjoining their land and will be given the first opportunity to do so. Second preference is given to governing bodies of small communities and urban areas. Final preference will be given to organizations, clubs and individuals.

Adoptions will not be allowed for political parties, political candidates, elected officials or entities that would constitute partisan endorsements. Any organization or individual whose sponsorship may have an adverse effect on the program is also ineligible.

Groups or individuals adopting sections of highway will be responsible for that roadside for a minimum of two years. Litter removal must be done at least twice a year or as necessary to keep the area clean. Litter pickup on primary roads must include both sides of the highway. Interstate highway litter pickup will be on one side of the highway.

Litter removal is automatically included in every Adopt-A-Highway sponsorship even though the main project may be landscaping or another activity.

**In addition to litter pickup and beautification** projects, adopting groups may also control noxious weeds by using DOT-approved methods, which may include hand weeding.

A minimum distance for adoption is one-half mile for special project work. However, adoption of at least two miles is required for litter pickup. Smaller sections may be permissible on stub routes or unusual sections of highway.

While working along a highway can be fun, safety of workers is a priority. Adopting organizations are required to hold safety meetings before work begins. Participants 14 years of age or younger should have adequate adult supervision.

Participants must also wear high-visibility safety vests when working on the highway right-of-way. Vests and orange trash bags will be furnished by the DOT.

For the safety of persons picking up litter, they should not pick up large objects or anything on or within 10 feet of the pavement. Picking up litter from the medians is not allowed. If sponsors encounter anything they regard as hazardous, they should not pick it up, but should notify the DOT.



**The sponsor must be willing to separate** litter according to the requirements of the landfill used by the local DOT maintenance garage. The sponsor may remove any recyclables and take them to a recycler of the sponsor's choice.



Signs featuring our state flower, the wild rose, will be erected by the DOT at no cost to the sponsor to recognize the efforts of adopting groups or individuals. In areas with many signs or very rough terrain, Adopt-A-Highway signing may not be possible.

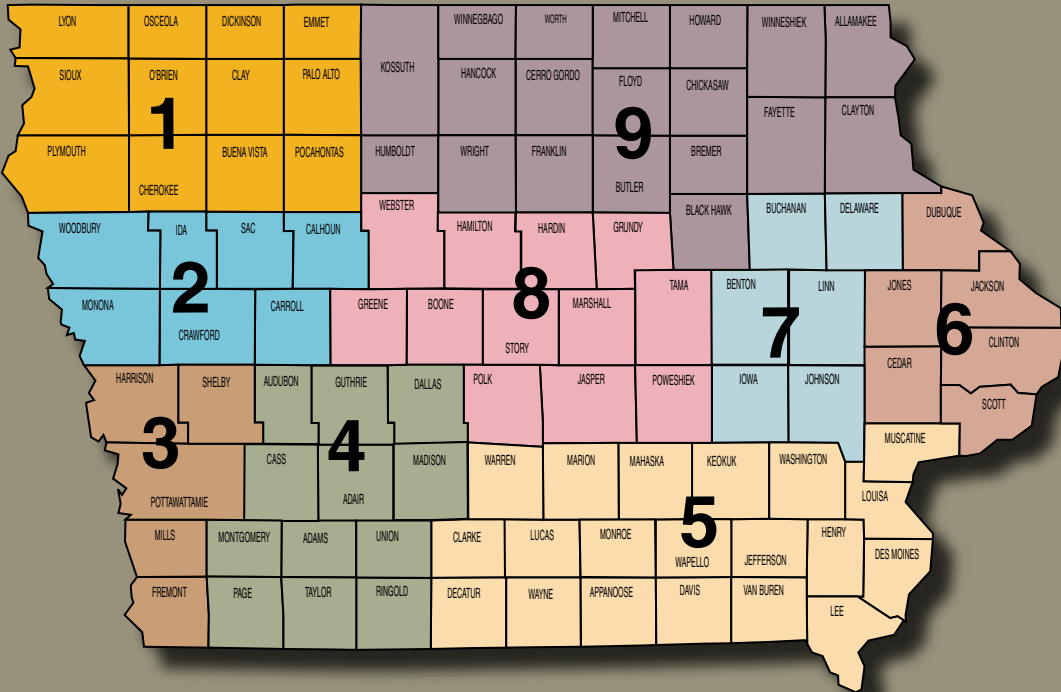
Signing is not a requirement for Adopt-A-Highway sponsorships. Sponsors may elect to adopt a highway section without signing.

The Adopt-A-Highway program allows individuals or groups to do one or more eligible activities on a segment of highway. These activities can reduce litter along highways, enhance the environment, beautify roadsides, and build broad-based community support for anti-litter and highway beautification programs. New ideas on how to beautify our roadsides are encouraged.

Through this program, adopting groups of individuals will gain recognition for themselves and build a positive image for the state.

Beautification projects may also be done along roads other than primary or state highways. People wishing to initiate beautification projects along a county road should contact their county conservation boards or county engineers for details.

# Adopt-A-Highway Area Representatives



1. Angela Meyer, Storm Lake  
712-732-4514, 800-373-7348

2. Jennie Sorensen, Denison  
712-263-3347, 800-683-8900

3. Lana Bruning, Council Bluffs  
712-366-4642, 866-834-9673

4. Marcia Buboltz, Atlantic  
712-243-3355, 800-289-4368

5. Kary Sobaski and Janet Sutter, Fairfield  
641-472-6142, 800-224-6019
6. Marilee Pityer, Dyersville  
563-875-2375, 800-262-5142

7. Jerome Steward, Cedar Rapids  
319-365-3558, 800-262-5144

8. Anna Hartwig, Ames  
515-233-9574, 800-436-8353

9. Pam Cox, Mason City  
641-423-8516, 800-373-7341

If you would like to be a part of a program that's creating a lasting impression for this and future generations to enjoy, or would like more information about this program, contact the Adopt-A-Highway representative nearest you.



Wearing the new high-visibility vests will enhance safety of Adopt-A-Highway participants.

*The new vests are available at your local DOT garage.*

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# Iowa's Adopt-A-Highway Program

